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OLD PAINTINGS FROM CHINA

The singular charm which some people discover in ancient pictures by Chinese masters, after the oddity has worn off through familiarity with them, is exerted by a goodly number of the paintings on paper and silk collected by Mr. Edgar Pierce Allen, an American lawyer who has been practising his profession in Tientsin since 1900. His pictures and miniatures may be seen at the Herter Looms. The largest is a big unframed picture, a large kakemono of a mythological subject painted by Huang Yintang under Shun Chih, the first emperor of the Ch'ing dynasty (1644-1662). On the left an Immortal stands upon a sea of clouds in a romantic yet conventional landscape of rocks, gnarled old trees, hills and lakes. She is a goddess named Hua Sheng-Ku, a graceful figure with a fan. To the right a man of high degree receives his devotees in a grove. Very beautiful and poetic are some of these views of sylvan sports, landscapes with figures, pictures of birds; full of rollicking fun a well-composed, very lively group of old men and four boys with the "peach of fertility" elevated like a banner on a crooked staff. Some of the books are delightful specimens of handiwork, big and beautiful manuscripts with pictures, and a text in which each Chinese character is a minim work of art.

SAN FRANCISCO ART PALACE

It is now definitely assured that San Francisco is to keep as a permanency the Palace of the Fine Arts which was part of the Panama-Pacific Exposition. The Art Association has taken over the building and will conduct it as a museum and gallery of the fine arts, proposing to raise a fund of several millions for its management and upkeep. Since the Exposition closed the exhibits in the Palace have been so well patronized by the public that the objections made to the locality seem to have been removed. In any case the grounds about it are to be cleared and laid out for a residential quarter with ample restrictions, in which this prize structure of the whole Exposition will be the center of interest. There was at one time a possibility that factories and tenement houses would occupy the site, but this is no longer feared. The building will be used for exhibitions of painting, sculpture and industrial arts, for concerts, meetings of musical societies and lectures on the arts, beside housing the permanent objects of the Museum of Fine Arts. While it was hoped that the Palace of Art of the Exposition would revert to the city after the fair was over, there was no certainty about it. The transfer of property seems to clinch the matter.

EXHIBITS—VARIOUS

December has been a very look-alive month in the way of art exhibits at the public galleries, at those of art dealers and in clubs, not to speak of the stations of the elevated and underground railways, which have been selected by one wide-awake sculptor as the proper places in which to advertise by large placards the latest of his statues. The artists are coming on. No shy sequestered violets found in some of them, no bashful waiting for applause, but the big colored placard outside the tent, the drum and

the barker to call the crowd! No shyness about writing his own eulogy for the public prints—everything Parisian and up to date!

Many artists having a slender baggage in the way of education to begin with proceed to Europe at an early age and live there during their formative years. Perhaps the art schools they find there are more thorough than those at home; certainly they drop into an atmosphere charged with zeal and partisanship with respect to art—that makes for enthusiasm. On the other hand there is a seamy side, because insensibly, being ignorant and young, they imbibe the prejudices and misconceptions of the ignorant foreigners among whom their lot is cast. Now among these misconceptions are many that refer to Americans. Foreigners believe that money-chasing and boastfulness and self-advertising are the rule in this country and for the most part the students from this side know too little about their own land to refute them. We may try to explain this unattractive example of placards and self-advertisement on the ground of ignorance produced by too long a stay abroad.

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The Arts Club has held its very practical and convenient gathering of the most decorative books published for the season and then the exhibit of the National Society of Craftsmen, the eleventh annual. At present the galleries are filled with a varied and attractive loan exhibit, paintings and sculptures by members of the club. In February they will contain the exhibit of the American Water-Color Society. The Century, Lotos and Union League, the MacDowell and Cosmopolitan clubs have had their share. At the Public Library a very noteworthy display of prints and books having to do with the drama is running side by side with another show, that recalling the work of the old English collector of ocean travels, Hackluyt.

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In Edmond Dulac, whose colored drawings appeared in the Scott and Fowles gallery a little before Christmas, we have a talented Frenchman with a keen sense of the good points in old Persian miniature work as well as in Aubrey Beardsley and Arthur Rackham. He is an eclectic well equipped as an illustrator of *The Thousand and One Nights*; for he manages Afreets and ghouls with a fine feeling for the terrific. Japanese and Hindoo suggestions are not lacking. Some of his Biblical or religious pictures exhibit an uncommon breadth and simplicity of composition; they possess to a very remarkable degree the very quality which James Tissot, for example, conspicuously lacked—a feeling of reverence if not exactly of awe. This versatility in Dulac is somewhat bewildering. It is understood that we owe the treat to the taste of Mr. Martin Birnbaum, until recently manager of the Berlin Photographic Gallery in New York. To a fine feeling for composition and mass-balance Dulac adds an unusually attractive sense for color. Apparently he has not obtained a mere *succès d'estime*, for the clever and fantastic little creations have found plenty of buyers. Like Bakst this versatile artist would be a capital hand to design robes and decorations for pageants and spectacular plays.

Christ Church, Short Hills, N. J., is enriched by an important Memorial Window, unveiled on Thanksgiving Day. The five panels are filled with the subject of "The Transfiguration" from the designs and cartoons of Frederick Stymetz Lamb. In them Mr. Lamb has carried out the scheme in a rich, deep tonality of color. The composition lends itself in light and shade to this gamut of color with its rich reds, greens and purples in the robes of the Apostles; they lead up chromatically to the central figure of Christ with the attendant figures of Moses and Elias. At the base of the central panel frame is the inscription: "In Memoriam. Juliet Graveraet Kaufman." Another window by the same artist was unveiled in the baptistry as a Christmas present to the congregation of Christ Church.

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At the Goupil Gallery on Forty-fifth Street West a series of drawings by Hugo Ballin, A.N.A., has proved a treat to connoisseurs. Spirited, delicate in touch and lovely, the little gathering made one understand how much hard, conscientious work goes into the preliminary phases of Mr. Ballin's large decorative compositions. The Winter show at the Academy of Design offers a large oil painting by Ballin called "The Bird Lovers" which reflects his liking for composition of the old noble type, though inferior in richness of color-scheme to many of his previous works.

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Mr. Charles P. Huntington who designed the home of the Hispanic Society, also the Spanish Chapel, the Geographic and Numismatic buildings, all on Broadway at 156th Street, has received a handle to his name; he may be addressed now as Sir Charles! The King of Spain has created him a Knight of the Order of Isabel the Catholic as a compliment for his architectural work. Certainly Spain has reason to feel gratified that New York has taken such an interest in her literature and art. What other city in the world has done the like? By the time the Heye Foundation has finished the museum of the American Indian next to the Hispanic we shall have the Cervantes Gate, reproduced in our October number from the architect's designs, rising in close connection with the buildings mentioned.

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The American Academy of Arts and Letters begins the new year with a course of public addresses at the Chemists' Club, 50 East Forty-first Street, on the corner of Park Avenue. On January 4th Mr. Paul Elmer More will speak about the Spirit and Poetry of early New England; on January 25th the painter, George de Forest Brush, will give an address on Art. On February 15th Professor Horatio W. Parker of Yale will talk about Orchestras and on March 8th Mr. William Gillette will give an address on a topic to be announced later. Cards of invitation may be had from Mr. Robert Underwood Johnson, Secretary of the Academy, at No. 70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

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The Metropolitan Museum has decided to form a new department of prints and enlarge its present

holdings. Mr. William M. Ivins, son of the distinguished lawyer of that name lately deceased, has been appointed curator. Like his father Mr. Ivins has been trained to the law, but his hobby has been fine prints while his father's hobby was fine books. It is a fortunate choice, since the junior is young, active and energetic. Under her maiden name Florence Wyman his wife has been known for charming work in black and white and colored crayons, for portraits and portrait groups, illustrations and designs for books and magazines. Mr. Ivins is likely to conduct his department with taste and skill.

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Since the appearance in our November number of strictures on the ugly water tanks that spoil the skyline of buildings, and especially buildings in New York, various letters have appeared in the daily press urging a reform in this part of the townscape. For instance Mr. C. Warde Trevor asks "Why do architects build palatial apartment houses with gilded lobbies and swell fronts, often richly covered with stone carvings and then perch unenclosed and stilted high on the roofs, water tanks generally painted red or black that can be seen from almost every direction?" Why indeed! But when he adds "Will some architect please start the reform? Other cities might follow after a while"—he is not quite fair to those architects who already have persuaded their clients to allow space for the inclusion of water tanks in the design itself. The inference is that this is not done at all. If he will read Mr. C. I. Berg's article, he will see that there are exceptions. Certainly it would not be so very difficult to design a variety of water-tank treatments, not necessarily to conceal the receptacle but while acknowledging its presence on the roof to give it an agreeable outline in harmony with the rest of the building. Good architects can accomplish that, if the property owners request it. The latter should remember that beauty in a building is distinctly an asset because it attracts and keeps tenants.

THE HELPING HAND

Friends of the Young Artists is an organization of some years' standing in New York. It began when the World War broke out and brought hard times beyond all precedent to a host of artists here and abroad who found themselves stranded. Beginning with the sculptors, the society held public competitions in turn for painters and architects, with prizes for the best work submitted. This year it has taken quarters in the Gainsborough, 222 West Fifty-ninth Street, where it hopes to establish a center for the exhibition and sale of works by young struggling artists, bringing the art objects to the attention of buyers. Meanwhile a fourth competition is being held at the above address, Mr. Otto Kahn offering a prize of \$200, Mr. C. J. Charles another of \$150, Mr. Paul Baumgarten one of \$100, and Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney ten honorary awards of \$25 each. Mrs. Whitney suggests as theme for the competition a "decorative and appropriate panel for the lobby of a theatre," the drawing not to exceed eighteen by twenty-two inches and the frame not to exceed one inch or, if a mat, three inches. This for decorators. The Society plans three more com-